

# GROWERTALKS

## GT in Brief

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## Walters Gardens Announces New CEO & Executive Team Leadership

*Jennifer Zurko*

Walters Gardens announced the leadership transition plan from the current CEO John Walters to Karin Walters, his daughter and current Vice President of Product Strategy. John will retain his role as CEO until October 1, 2022, when the transition will take place and he'll take on a new role as Executive Chairman of the Board.

Karin Walters is a member of a third-generation leadership team at Walters Gardens, which also includes Ryan Hop, Chief Operations Officer, and Christa Steenwyk, Vice President of Marketing and Industry Relationships. Since the Executive Team at Walters Gardens began succession planning in 2019, it's been a focus to intentionally transition from a smaller company at the helm of one leader to a larger company mindset guided by a cohesive team of leaders in Karin, Ryan and Christa.



*Pictured: Walters Gardens Executive Team members. From left to right: Ryan Hop, Chief Operations Officer; Christa Steenwyk, Vice President of Marketing and Industry Relations; John Walters, Chief Executive Officer; and Karin Walters, Vice President of Product Strategy.*

Under John's leadership, Walters Gardens has grown from a smaller company mainly serving the Midwest through bareroot sales, mail order and packaged perennials to a respected international presence in the industry.

"It's been a long process of planning, especially since I love this company and industry so much," said John. "I'm proud to say that I have a great deal of confidence that not only Karin will do a great job as CEO, but with Ryan and Christa (and myself) rounding out the Executive Leadership Team, Walters Gardens is in a strong position for the future with such a team."

"I am excited to take on this new role in October and continue to build the dream our family has been working on for many years with the help and support of Christa and Ryan," said Karin. **GT**